Escape from Traxus Factory Complex 9

by Texan Rebel

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Escape from Traxus Factory Complex 9

Summary: During Floodgate. Shortly after the Flood ship crashes in Voi, Master Chief heads back to the Traxus Factory Warehouse to regroup and saves some Marines. This is their story.

A/N: I found out I could save Marines on accident during the campaign, so I thought I would see how many I could save and make a short story out of it. Nothing special about this, it's just my take at what transpired at the warehouse.

The sky became increasingly dark after the flood ship crashed; the smoke obscuring the sun even more with the storm. Master Chief, Arbiter, the surviving factory workers, and Marines collected themselves.

Master Chief turned to one of the Marines. "Stay here and call for EVAC, the Arbiter and I will go back."

"Yes sir" the Marine answered, turning to another who had the radio pack. The survivors took up defensive positions while they waited.

The Arbiter and Master Chief started back to the remains of the warehouse they had recently come from.

At the loading ramp to the warehouse, a squad of Marines holds position, waiting for orders when they hear the COM chatter between Commander Keyes and Lord Hood.

"_The Flood â€“ it's spreading all over the city"_

"_How do we contain it?"_

"_Find the crashed Flood ship; overload its engine core. We either destroy the city, or risk losing the entire planet."_

"_Do it."_

"_Chief, make your way to the crash site."_

One of the Marines behind the sandbags turned to his female companion, "You hear that Ortega?"

"Yeah I did Williams. This shit is getting deep" she replied. More COM chatter came through.

"_All squads, report!"_ Gunnery Sergeant Reynolds ordered.

A Marine from another squad responded, _"Multiple contacts, unknown hostiles."_

"_There, over there! We're surrounded, Sergeant!"_ another cried out. Gunfire was heard in the background._ "Aaaaah!"_ the unfortunate Marine cried out as he and his squad was infected.

The Marines by the ramp tensed up as they heard the last transmission. Ortega looked back to her squad as she and Williams started to back towards the door. "Sergeant, come on!" Ortega beckoned.

Sergeant Reynolds and the squad on the ramp made a move towards the door just as the Flood poured down on them from the roof, causing them to cry out as they were overtaken. Ortega and Williams raised their SMGs and fired at the infection and combat forms while trying to avoid hitting their squad mates.

Despite their best efforts, they still watched the flood infect and mutate the several men. Reynolds was somehow spared, probably from the combined fire of Ortega and Williams and just sheer luck.

The two survivors just watched in horror as the squad rose up and turned towards them, their guns now empty. Reynolds was knocked down by a combat form as the Flood charged and the Marines swapped magazines. They were saved when the Master Chief and Arbiter came with a shotgun and carbine, unleashing lead and plasma on the Flood.

Ortega and Williams finished reloading and fired again. Reynolds, now covered in Flood flesh and fluid, picked up his fallen rifle and started to shoot the combat forms as Williams shredded the infected form of one the former Marines that was charging them and turned to the other forms after he finished.

Williams loaded another magazine as he turned back to Ortega to see if she was alright. She nodded in acknowledgement with a grim expression. He and Ortega turned to see the Chief pointing his shotgun at them. He fired.

Instead of feeling buckshot penetrating armor and flesh, a loud

popping sound was heard as the shot went between them. The explosion of dozens of infection forms pushed the Marines into the sandbag barrier, the momentum carrying them over it. Both of their backs were covered in Flood flesh and fluids. They recovered and got back on their feet in time to fight the second wave which now consisted of just combat forms due to chiefs saving shot.

The five finished off the last few combat forms with ease. Chief sprinted ahead through the door to the warehouse, leaving the Arbiter, Reynolds, Ortega, and Williams to catch up with him.

Private Jackson ran as fast as he could towards the gunfire he heard outside. He heard something behind him, chasing him. As he turned around to raise his rifle, he was swarmed with Flood infection forms.

"GET IT OFF! GET IT OFF!" as he dropped his rifle and tried to push them off as he fell to the ground. He was going to die.

The sound of a shotgun blast was heard and Jackson felt a few pellets hit his armor, left arm, and shoulder but also popping the infection forms before they could pierce his chest, making a home out of him.

As chief finished the lingering forms, the Arbiter and three Marines came through the door.

The Arbiter and Ortega went to the large window to cover the Chief as he went to fight them, but Williams was the first to see Jackson. "You alright man?" he asked as he helped the fallen Marine into a sitting position. Gunny Reynolds saw that Jackson was being tended to before he went to the door on the other end of the room and let loose on the Flood.

Jackson looked at the other Marine, surprised that there were survivors. "Yeah, but I took a hit. Gah! That hurt" he grunted.

Williams took out his medical kit and started to patch up Jackson when Ortega pointed to two more Marines fighting the flood in a corner. She and the Arbiter fired on the attackers from their position as Master Chief and Reynolds moved in to save them.

Gunnery Sergeant Stacker and Private First Class Hardy kept fighting the Flood. They were the only survivors as far as they knew but that did not mean that they would just lie down and die.

"Cover me, reloading!" Hardy said as she swapped magazines in her MA5C. She only had four more on her but another ten in the weapons crate next to her to last both of them.

"Hit them with grenade!" ordered Stacker as the combat forms started to clump together. Hardy threw it perfectly and was rewarded with torn bodies flying everywhere.

Hardy was now back in the fight with a fresh magazine and put it to good use.

They held out for a few minutes before the Master Chief, Arbiter, and

other surviving Marines started to lend their firepower to help. Chief and Reynolds joined Hardy and Stacker behind the sandbags while the Arbiter and Ortega covered them from the high ground, finishing the remaining Flood with ease.

"Glad you guys showed up, I don't know how much longer we could have lasted without your help" Stacker said.

"How many from your platoon are still alive?" Reynolds asked. Stacker just shrugged his shoulders before going to the weapons crate to grab a few magazines, the other followed suit. The Arbiter and three Marines that were in the office showed up soon after.

"Good to see you Sarge!" Jackson stated, relieved.

Stacker noticed the bandages and sling on his left arm. "What happened to you, Private?"

"Chief saved my ass, sir."

Stacker nodded in understanding. "You better stay behind us then" he said, Jackson nodded.

The group started going back through the warehouse when Ortega asked a question. "What do those balloon things do exactly?"

"It gets inside you, chews you up" Hardy responded.

They passed several bodies, some not infected. "We gotta get outta here" Williams muttered.

They rounded a corner and saw some Marines fighting on the walkway and open fired, distracting some of the horde long enough for a Marine to use a flamethrower on them. This drew the attention of the Flood on the main floor, including the army of infection forms.

"Frag out!" Stacker cried out as he threw a grenade into the mass of infection forms. Only a few survived the resulting blast but were easily eliminated as the combat forms moved in for the kill. The firefight lasted a full minute before the area was clear and the group moved up.

"Wretched parasite! Rise up and I will kill you! Again and again!" stated the Arbiter as he took down any Flood that tried to get back up with his plasma sword.

"Go ahead Chief, we'll hold here for rescue" Stacker said as two Marines joined them. Master Chief and the Arbiter moved ahead to get to the crashed cruiser.

"You guys may need this" the Marine with the flamethrower said before handing it to the Arbiter. He then joined the squad of survivors.

"You all that's left?" asked one of the new Marines.

"Yeah, we are man" said Williams.

"Who are you two and what happened?" inquired Reynolds.

"Private Cromwell, sir" stated the one formerly with the flamethrower.

"Corporal Jenson, sir," the other said. "They go the drop on some of us. We held out as long as we could, butâ€¦"

Reynolds put a comforting hand on Jenson's shoulder, letting him know he understood. They were interrupted when the Arbiter came on the COMs. _"There is another survivor that needs assistance. Go to him, before he does something he will regret."_

"We're on our way, Arbiter" Stacker returned before he signaled the other seven surviving Marines forward.

They tried the door only to find it locked. Cromwell pointed out that there was a hole into the roof of the room the Flood made that they could use to get in. Moving quickly but cautiously, they entered the hole and made their way through the halls to the main office. They found the Marine leaning on the wall with a pistol in his hand, sobbing.

All of them were hesitant to move forward. Ortega mad the first move and approached him slowly with her hands out. "Hey" she called softly.

The Marine almost jumped out of his skin. He pointed the pistol at her causing her to freeze in fear and the others to tense up or point their weapons at him. "Theyâ€¦ they all diedâ€¦ I shot themâ€¦. before they could turn intoâ€¦intoâ€¦" he said before breaking down into sobs again.

Ortega brushed aside the pistol and hugged the sobbing Marine. The others relaxed.

An Elite's voice over the COM channels, _"Hail, humans, take heed. This is the carrier_ Shadow of Intent_. Clear this sector, while we deal with the Flood."_

"Gunny", Hardy said, getting the attention of Reynolds and Stacker "what do we do?"

Both of the Gunnery Sergeants looked around at the survivors. Jackson was injured and blood was coming through his bandages, they had one suffering from PTS, and all were low on ammo. Not all of them could help with clearing the area, but the rest could. The Sergeants backed away to speak privately for a minute.

Reynolds spoke up. "We can take five of them and call a Pelican to pick up the wounded."

"We need to scavenge ammo first. I'll call the drop ship; you get them ready to move out."

Reynolds nodded and strode over to the seven Marines. "Listen, we are going to help with the sweep. Find ammo and get ready to finish these parasitic fuckers!" The others fist pumped each other and showed their signs of approval. He made his way to Ortega who still had the now calmer, but still shaken Marine. "You have a name?"

The shaken man looked at Reynolds. "P-private Norris, sir" he answered shakily.

"Listen, you are going to be evacuated shortly, your done for now." Norris' face lightened slightly at this. "You are going with Jackson to one of the ships. He'll take care of you."

As Reynolds made his way to Jackson to give him his orders, Norris started to open up a little to Ortega. Stacker came back to the squad a minute later.

"Listen Marines, Kilo 023 is coming to pick us up and will have ammo. Be outside in ten!" Stacker announced.

Kilo 023, piloted by Lieutenant Hocus, flew towards the warehouse to pick up the Marines that had miraculously survived the Flood. She did not know how they made it, but was happy that they made it out.

It took her several minutes to get there, but she had no problem finding them. They were holding out by the alien drop pods on the lake bed. She used the built in cameras and Johnsons directing to carefully maneuver the Pelican's back end so the Marines could get on.

"_There in Hocus, let's go"_ Johnson called over the radio.

"Hold on everyone, it's going to be a little bumpy" Hocus announced as she fed fuel into the engines and blasted towards the _Forward Unto Dawn_ to rearm, refuel, and drop off the casualties.

For the surviving Marines in the back, the hard part was over. They had time to get ready for the sweep ahead of them and the rest of the surviving UNSC forces. They knew that the fight was not over just yet, but they were going to see it finished, even if it meant chasing Truth through that portal to only God knows where.

End
file.